

Wine Retailer Opts for Hybrid Solution



Total Wine & More Operates 100 Superstores in 15 States

Capturing a clear image of the denomination on a bill deposited in a cash register or the label on a \$2,000 bottle of wine requires a high-definition IP camera, but if your video recorder limits your options to analog only, what do you do?

Total Wine & More, a privately-owned chain of 100 wine, beer and spirit superstores in 15 states, decided to transition to a new video surveillance system when it began opening Internet fulfillment centers in its retail stores.

Shipping expensive bottles of wine around the country was simply too risky without irrefutable evidence that the correct product was shipped and picked up by the courier.



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— Mark Ganter, Senior Project Manager,
Total Wine & More

A video surveillance system that limited Total Wine’s options to all-analog or all-IP was out of the question.

“We knew that going forward, we weren’t going to abandon our analog cameras, but we would progressively over time begin adding more IP cameras to our buildout as costs came down,” said Total Wine Senior Project Manager Mark Ganter.

The solution recommended by another retailer also transitioning to IP cameras was a hybrid March Networks® video surveillance system capable of accommodating both.

March Networks’ hybrid NVRs allow for a mix of up to 32 analog or IP cameras, offering customers like Total Wine the freedom to transition to higher-definition video as the need arises and as budgets are freed up.

Total Wine’s bricks and mortar sales accounts for the lion’s share of its business. Its stores are 25,000-square foot emporiums selling 8,000 different wines, 3,000 spirits and 2,500 varieties of beer from around the

world. They feature walk-in cigar humidors and keg rooms, wine tasting areas and classrooms.

Due to interstate wine shipment regulations, a centralized fulfillment centre for Internet sales wouldn’t have worked, so Total Wine set up mini-fulfillment centres in its bricks and mortar stores, where product is pulled from the shelves, packaged and shipped to customers by courier.

“We installed IP cameras in the fulfillment rooms to capture images of shipping information and labels for proof of packaging and delivery,” said Ganter. “We want to be able to verify that a particular bottle with a particular vintage was packaged and shipped.

“We position an IP camera directly above the packaging desk. The fulfillment worker takes a bottle, places it label side up directly beneath the camera, then proceeds to place it in a box. That image is recorded. The shipping label is time stamped, so we know exactly when the order was processed

and can go back in the archives to retrace the steps of the fulfillment process in the event that product or shipment verification is needed.”

Additional cameras are positioned to capture the pickup by the courier.

“Once UPS enters our shipping area in the building and takes physical possession of the package, the burden of insurance is transferred from Total Wine to the courier,” said Ganter.

High resolution cameras are also installed to cover each store’s eight to 12 point-of-sale stations.

Overhead monitors installed in work areas at the front entrance of each store alert customers to the fact that they are under surveillance and offer Total Wine staff an overview of what’s happening throughout the store.

Total Wine, headquartered in Potomac, Maryland, has specified March Networks as its preferred video surveillance vendor. The company began rolling out

4000 Series Hybrid NVRs in 2013 and is now transitioning to 32-channel 8000 Series units with 6 TB of onboard storage as new stores are opened or existing ones are relocated or renovated.

Starting with two stores in Delaware in 1991, brothers David and Robert Trone are now opening an average of 12 to 15 stores a year.

While March Networks® was selected primarily for its ability to accommodate both analog and IP cameras, the available software functionality and extensive video analytics made it an attractive option as the company's business requirements evolve.

Total Wine's video surveillance system is primarily used for loss prevention, but it also comes in handy when Ganter and his colleagues need to confirm or research a facilities issue from the head office.

"We have such vast coverage that we can see almost every part of a store, so we'll use the video surveillance system if we identify a problem or need to inspect an area," said Ganter.

At some point in the future, the system may also serve as a resource for Total Wine area managers and marketing executives for oversight of merchandising and store presentation.

"We're very happy with our March Networks system and the support we have received," said Ganter. "March Networks satisfies our immediate need for a hybrid system, but also provides us with the opportunity down the road to benefit from more powerful loss prevention and business intelligence functionality." ▼



Total Wine & More

Total Wine & More (www.totalwine.com) is America's Wine Superstore® — and the country's largest independent retailer of fine wine. Founded in 1991 by brothers David and Robert Trone, the company now operates 100 superstores across 15 states. A typical store carries more than 8,000 different wines from every wine-producing region in the world.

